

Bible Basics Conference 2012: “Genesis 1-12”

Part 9

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[00:00:00] We have, I think, seven questions. If I may, I will ask the first three, which are of a general nature, and I should be able to set a good example and not take too long to answer them. Then I'll call on three brothers who have questions which relate to something specific that they have said. Now, the first question is, where is the Garden of Eden today? Is it still on this earth? Answer, it was barred to man when Adam sinned, and it was washed away in the flood. And the earth that came out of the flood is not precisely the same, it will have changed as a result of the flood. So do [00:01:03] not try to discover where the Garden of Eden once was. His second question is, is the Ark not rather a figure of water baptism? Well, certainly it is a figure of water baptism. It's all those things that our brother Jeff was telling us about, but it is a figure of water baptism. In 1 Peter chapter 3, which he speaks of spirits in prison which sometime were disobedient when once the long suffering of God awaited in the days of Noah while the Ark was a preparing wherein few, that is eight souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God [00:02:06] by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. So there is the Apostle Peter's answer. The Apostle Peter is concerned with entry into the kingdom and it is possibly baptism in that sense where this figure comes into play. I hope that suffices for that question. Thirdly, now here's a difficult one. Why does God say he creates evil in Isaiah 45 verse 7? Let's just read the verse first.

Isaiah 45 verse 7, I form the light and create darkness. I make peace and create evil. I the [00:03:01] Lord do all these things. I believe this verse is speaking of circumstances. God through the prophet Isaiah is not saying that he is the author of evil. Banish that thought from your minds. What he is saying is, and he's speaking here of his dealings with the nation of Israel, and he's speaking to Cyrus, a Gentile king who he does actually call somewhere my servant Cyrus. And he's speaking to Cyrus of what he is going to do in relation to Israel. He's prospered them. He's guarded them. He's guided them. And they've disobeyed. They've gone in for other gods and now he has to bring in discipline. Now he has to send them into banishment as was mentioned earlier this afternoon. He has to send them away and just as he has brought them into peace or it might be [00:04:07] prosperity, so he's going to bring them into difficult circumstances, bad circumstances. I believe that that's what that verse means. Nothing to do with evil as sin. Nothing to do with that at all. But into that which for them

will be uncomfortable because God needs to secure his purpose for his people Israel. He needs to deal with them according to their doings and then ultimately to bring about the prophecies whereby the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Now I hope that that answers that question. Now I think it would be best to take these in the order in which they spoke. So if I could ask brother Rusty please to come and answer his question. Then Hans [00:05:08] Rudy has two and Jeff has one. So if you'd please each come up here. You have to come up here because this is where the mic is. Sorry. Basic question. It was suggested that animals were beings with a soul. Are souls not eternal? Second question. If so it would seem strange that animals should be eternal beings. Could you please explain a little more? Well first of all I don't think I said and certainly wouldn't want you to go away here thinking that animals are eternal. The reason why I suggested that animals have a soul is because the scriptures actually said so. And if you take a [00:06:04] Strong's Concordance and look up the verse in first the first chapter of Genesis verse 22 where it speaks about the animals and it says they became living creatures. You look up that word creatures and you put it into the Strong's Concordance on your computer or on your manual one you will find that it is number 829. If you put the same word which we had in chapter 2 verse 7 soul it is the same word in the original Hebrew. So animals have souls. But when we come to Ecclesiastes we have a verse which may confuse some. It's Ecclesiastes 4 and it says Ecclesiastes 3 verse 19 for that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth the beasts. Every one [00:07:08] befalleth them. Yea the one dies so dieth the other. Yea they all have one breath so that man has no preeminence above the beasts for all is vanity. It goes on who knoweth the spirit of a man that goeth upwards and the spirit of the beast that goeth downwards to the earth. Here is Solomon's inspired ideas according to human wisdom. And certainly according to human wisdom we may wonder why animals have souls and humans have a soul but one goes down and the other goes up. And I want to suggest that a key is in Job 33 verse 4 where it says the Spirit of God has made me and the breath of the Almighty has given me life. And the clear distinction that I think [00:08:05] we have in Genesis chapter 2 is that it was into man, into mankind that God breathed the breath of life. And the big difference between animals and man is that into man was breathed the breath of life and that will last for eternity. So I think that hopefully will clear up the point. I have received two questions. One is it was said that God puts a stamp on every marriage.

Does that mean that God accepts a marriage even though it may not be his will? Marriage, for instance marriage to an unbeliever or what is meant by this? I like to read from [00:09:04] Matthew chapter 19 that we first look at the Word of God here. Verse 5 and he said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife and they twain shall be one flesh. Therefore they are no more twain but one flesh. For therefore God has joined together let not man put asunder. It shows very clearly in this verse that it does not depend of whether God can agree with that marriage or not. It says if you have married and you have become no more twain but one flesh, God says I don't want that this oneness is going to be [00:10:05] separated again. We find in 1 Corinthians a similar thought expressed by the Apostle Paul where it says 1 Corinthians 7 and unto the married I command yet not I but the Lord let not the wife depart from her husband. But then if she depart let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband and not the husband put away his wife. It doesn't say anything about the condition under which they were married. It says once you are married you belong together and God accepts that marriage and further down it says maybe there was both of you were unsaved [00:11:06] and it says now if you if one of the parties become saved what should you do? Should you leave your husband? Should you leave your wife? He said no. And then Paul says very clearly now you should not depart, you should not go but to the rest speak I not the Lord if any brother has a wife that believeth not and she be pleased to dwell with him let him not put her away. So you find there a very clear example that God hates putting away. That's Malachi 2. It doesn't have no condition it just says God hates putting away and that's why I said I think God puts

the stamp [00:12:01] on every marriage. He accepts it whatever you have decided you have married God says okay this marriage is now a binding and I don't want to put away because if you think the other way then it's very easy you can say well you know this was not a marriage you know in the Lord's will so I can do whatever I am pleased. No God wants you to stay with that wife and you don't know if the wife is not saved whether you cannot through your testimony bring her to the Lord. So that's the idea of why I said God approves. Now God puts a stamp it's not an approval that he agrees with it but he says now these two people are married and I accept this as a marriage. And the second question is we only read [00:13:01] at the very end of Genesis 24 that after Rebecca became Isaac's wife he loved her. Is love the most important thing to have for a woman when considering God's will for her life's partner? That's a good question. Rebecca could not have fallen into love with Isaac. She didn't know him. And I think love is important. There can be cases that a man is really asking a girl to get married and she says or you know she says well I do not know I do not know is it the Lord's will. So the question is [00:14:02] really that this person has to be before the Lord to say is this now from the Lord or not. And I often said to my sons you know sometimes it takes you months and more than months maybe a year or so you pray about it and once you come to the decision that now this is the right one for you and you make an application. I said give her time. Now you take all this time and now you want an answer right away. Now give her time. And this time is also given to Rebecca. You know she saw the way the Lord led Eliazer the servant. She could see all these different steps. He explained everything. He said this is how I prayed about it. This is how God showed me. So he showed all these things to her and then at the end in verse 58 it says and they called Rebecca and said unto her will thou go with [00:15:09] this man. So then comes the question now what do you want. Now you have seen the Lord's leading but now your question and she says I will go. So she has to come to the point that she says yes before the Lord I see it the same way. And it's not a question of the measure of love but love is important. You cannot go into marriage when you don't feel anything for your husband or vice versa. You cannot enter into such a relationship. But it can well be and I can tell you of cases where the girl didn't know anything about it came out of the blue here comes a letter and now what shall she do. She has to pray. She has to be before the Lord. She has to wait to get an answer from the [00:16:06] Lord and here Rebecca says I will go. So this was really the basis of her going and then the thing came later on and you know it never says that the woman has to love the husband but it says to the husband that you have to love your wife even as Christ. I think that speaks to us men. God knows the woman is made differently but it's up to us to show that love and that reference and I think the response will come if it's the Lord's will. But I would not suggest to go into any relationship if you don't feel anything about it. Now God would also create that love in your heart for your husband. So then it's better to wait. Then it's better to pray about it till you're sure and it [00:17:04] could be that the answer is no and you also have to accept this. I'll read the question to you. It's a good question. How can angels, spirit beings, traffic in a material and carnal way with creatures of flesh and blood, the daughters of men, to produce a physical and material seed? And then really subsidiary questions. Is not this a form of evolution? And lastly, does it not contradict after its kind in Genesis 1? I think if we look at the epistle to Jude it's worth looking at a couple of verses. So the epistle to Jude verses 6 and 7. And the angels which kept not their first estate but [00:18:13] left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them in like manner giving themselves over to fornication going after strange flesh are set forth for an example suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. So we're told here in the epistle to the Jude that the angels left their first estate. That God created the angels as he did man, woman, and the animals. But the angels, some of the angels left the position [00:19:03] that God had put them in. We looked at Genesis 6 and we saw the reason in verse 2. The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair. They lusted after the daughters of men. They left their first estate, they had wrong thoughts, they weren't prepared to

remain in the position that God had put them in, and they fell in this way. Now the question really asks how is this possible? We have to rely upon what scripture tells us. And one of the reasons for reading verse 7 was to refer you back to Sodom and Gomorrah. And if you wanted to look at chapter 19, and without going into what is really abhorrent [00:20:03] of details, chapter 19 verse 1 tells us, and there came two angels to Sodom at even.

So there were two angels. And I mentioned that the angels in the Old Testament appeared, mentioned Lot, mentioned Abraham in a human form. Now these men were clearly, these angels were obviously clearly and looked like men. Men to such a degree that as we glance through the rest of the chapter, we know the story that these men were taken in by Lot and that there was a riot really at the door because the men of Sodom wanted to have physical relations with these two angels that looked like men. And even Lot said to them, here are my daughters, have them. So from those examples, we can see that there, that from the scripture in [00:21:12] chapter 6, that that was possible. We might not know or understand it, but these angels looked like men and looked like men to those who were living in Sodom and Gomorrah. Now the subsidiary questions really unfurl a whole another question. Is not this a form of evolution?

Now evolution we know is wrong. We know it's man's attempt to explain the creation and particularly the creation of man. Here, when people talk about evolution, which we know to be wrong, then they're thinking of the same creature, and it's wrong, it's difficult [00:22:02] to explain something that we believe is wrong, that is changing through mutations and producing something that's a little bit different. But here in the scriptures, we're not talking, we're talking about two distinctly different beings that God has created, angels and men, that should have nothing to do with each other. And we're not talking even about creatures that God has made to live upon this earth, mixing together. Because we know that when things mix, particularly in this way, then it is really disastrous, it is very wrong, it's not what God attempted. So I think we should avoid that idea of thinking about evolution at all. And the last part, does it not contradict after its kind in Genesis 1? If we go to Genesis 1, I think the verse has certainly been alluded to, verse 12 we could have a look at, talking [00:23:08] about the grasses and the herbs, and it talks there whose seed was in itself, and after his kind, and God saw that it was good. God created vegetable matter, living matter, that would produce after its kind. We know when we're talking about evolution, it's one of the ways we can read from scripture that evolution didn't take place, because we're produced after our own kind. So again, after its own kind talks about things on earth. And we need to remember that in this case, it was definitely wrong that the angels mixed with men. And here, when it's talking about after its kind, it's talking about things that occur on this [00:24:03] earth, and we know that this is what God has directed, and we believe that this is what happened, that creatures produce only after their kind. Somebody's just, in fact, given me another supplementary and said, why would they want to stop being angels? In other words, why would these angelic beings want to stop becoming angels? And we can see, can't we, that it was really because they lusted after the sons of men, because they were fair. That's why they did it, and as the scriptures tell us, they kept not their first estates. I'd be quite interested to speak with this person, because I think he does raise a number of issues, if they so wish. Thank you, Geoff. There is another question, actually, which Michael's going to answer now. Right, the question is this. If the creation is a picture of the work of God in the soul [00:25:24] in new creation, does this not suppose a previous state of ruin or failure or sin? Well, I'm grateful for this question, because it gives me opportunity to mention a couple of things that I couldn't pack into this morning's rather compressed speech, or whatever you want to call it. First point is about types. We must never build a New Testament doctrine [00:26:05] or a doctrine on a type. Once the doctrine is established, we can recognize that a certain thing illustrates that doctrine in type. Now, that's something we emphasize

quite often. What we perhaps don't emphasize that often is that nor should we do the opposite and take a New Testament doctrine and use that to determine what must have happened to the type. So I'm not going to do that either. Now, if you look at the things in the Old Testament that have typical meaning, I would divide them into two classes. One class is types where the New Testament tells you explicitly this is a type of that, like the rock was [00:27:04] the Christ. There you have the authoritative explanation from the New Testament explicitly, and it is clear. But you also have a category of types where you don't have that explanation. The example I would give is, and there are many, many examples, I would give is Joseph. If I asked you who is Joseph a picture of, everybody would say of the Lord Jesus, how he was hated by his brethren and so on and so on, you know the story. Now, nowhere in the New Testament does it say Joseph was a type of the Lord Jesus, and yet it is such a clear type that we can recognize it. Now, Genesis 1, seen as illustration of the spiritual development in man, falls into the first category. I've given you at least four scriptures from the New Testament that have [00:28:05] made clear what was meant by the verses referred to in Genesis 1. For example, 2 Corinthians 4, 6, the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness has shone into our hearts. And I gave you a few other verses. So it really falls into the category of clearer types that are explained by the New Testament. And my last point on this is the following. In creation, God has revealed himself. But he has not only revealed himself in creation, he has also revealed himself in Christ. And he also, this is also reflected in that which God forms in a believer in new creation. Now, [00:29:03] therefore, it shouldn't really be as surprising as it is at first sight when you are told Genesis 1 gives a picture of the spiritual development of a believer, but also of dispensations, and also of Christ, and so on. Because these are ways in which God has revealed himself, and we should not be surprised if there is a certain consistency between those different aspects of looking at that chapter. I'm happy to have a conversation, but I think we have another address now. So I hand over to Simon, but I'm very happy to speak to the person who asked the question if anything has been left open.